

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BERLIN 05132 281558Z

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION USBERLIN UNN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 5132

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, MILI, GE, WB, EB, US, UK, FR, GW

SUBJECT: TRAVEL POLICY IN GDR AND IN BERLIN

REF: BONN 19641 OF 23 DEC 1974

1. SUMMARY: THE EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT IT BE MADE CLEAR IN PARAGRAPH 5(A) OF THE DRAFT TEXT THAT WHILE ALLIED AUTHORITIES IN WEST BERLIN MAY BE AUTHORIZED TO PROVIDE "FACILITIES" (IN THE U.S. CASE, THE YELLOW ID CARD) TO PERSONNEL OF ALLIED EMBASSIES TO THE GDR, IT WILL NOT BE THE U.S. PRACTICE TO DO SO AS LONG AS THE WORDING IN THE YELLOW U.S. IDENTIFICATION CARD REMAINS AS IT NOW IS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS EMBASSY HAS INEVITABLY
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 BERLIN 05132 281558Z

COMPLICATED ALLIED TRAVEL, AND AGAIN BROUGHT TO LIGHT

SOME OF THE BUILT-IN CONTRADICTIONS IN THE STATUS OF BERLIN. THESE CONTRADICTIONS NEED NOT BE BELABORED. SUFFICE IT TO SAY THAT THE FACT THAT THE GDR HAS LOCATED ITS CAPITAL IN THE SOVIET SECTOR OF BERLIN, AND THAT THERE ARE NOW ALLIED EMBASSIES ESTABLISHED IN THIS SECTOR, AND OFFICIAL ALLIED PERSONNEL RESIDENT IN THE SOVIET SECTOR WHO ARE ACCREDITED TO THE GDR IN THE SAME WAY THAT THEY WOULD BE ACCREDITED TO THE GOC IF THEY WERE LOCATED IN PRAGUE--HAS CREATED SOME NEW DIFFICULTIES OF A THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL KIND IN OUR EFFORTS TO SUPPORT THE SPECIAL STATUS OF BERLIN. NOT ALL OF THE CONTRADICTIONS ARE NEW. THE FACT THAT NON-UNIFORMED ALLIED PERSONNEL STATIONED IN WESTERN SECTORS OF THE CITY HAVE FOR MANY YEARS BEEN IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES TO EAST GERMAN BORDER GUARDS WHEN CROSSING FROM WESTERN SECTORS INTO THE SOVIET SECTOR IS ALSO AN ANOMALY.

3. WE HAVE STUDIED WITH CARE THE DRAFT TEXT OF "PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES FOR TRAVEL BY ALLIED (US,UK AND FRENCH) PERSONNEL IN AND THROUGH EAST BERLIN AND THE GDR," AND OFFER THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON PARAGRAPH FIVE OF THE TEXT WHICH CONCERNS PERSONNEL OF ALLIED EMBASSIES TO THE GDR.

4. SECTION 5(A) STATES THAT PERSONNEL OF ALLIED EMBASSIES TO THE GDR MAY, AT SECTOR BOUNDARY CROSSING POINTS, USE THEIR GDR DIPLOMATIC IDENTIFICATION CARDS FOR ALLIED DOCUMENTATION "OR FACILITIES WHICH THEIR OWN AUTHORITIES IN WEST BERLIN MAY BE AUTHORIZED TO PROVIDE." THE CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH SUCH AUTHORIZATION MAY BE GIVEN ARE SPECIFIED TO INCLUDE: FIRST ARRIVALS; TEMPORARY DUTY PERSONNEL; CLOSE RELATIVES OF EMBASSY PERSONNEL VISITING BERLIN; AND USE BY EMBASSY PERSONNEL DURING ANNUAL GDR RECALL OF DIPLOMATIC AND STAFF ID CARDS.

5. THE "FACILITIES" REFERRED TO ARE THE ID CARDS ISSUED TO ALLIED MEMBERS OF FORCES IN WEST BERLIN BY THEIR COMMAND ORGANIZATIONS. IN THE U.S. CASE, THIS IS THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BERLIN 05132 281558Z

YELLOW CARD WITH THE AMERICAN FLAG IN THE UPPER LEFT HAND CORNER LABELED "IDENTIFICATION CARD" AND BEARING THE HEADING "U.S. FORCES BERLIN." THIS CARD, FOR MISSION PERSONNEL, IS SIGNED ON THE COVER BY THE DEPUTY COMMANDANT, WHO IS THE SENIOR STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICER AT USBER. ON THE INSIDE, THIS CARD CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT IN FOUR LANGUAGES: "THE BEARER OF THIS CARD IS A MEMBER OF THE U.S. FORCES, BERLIN."

IN THE GERMAN VERSION THE WORD "FORCES" IS TRANSLATED AS "STREITKRAEFTEN," UNDERLINING THE MILITARY CHARACTER OF THIS DESIGNATION. THERE IS ALSO A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE BEARER, HIS NAME, SIGNATURE AND A DATE OF ISSUANCE.

6. MEMBERS OF THE U.S. EMBASSY STAFF IN BERLIN (TO SAY NOTHING OF THEIR CLOSE RELATIVES) CANNOT ACCURATELY BE DESCRIBED AS MEMBERS OF THE U.S. FORCES, BERLIN. THIS DESIGNATION IS INCORRECT ON ITS FACE. SUCH PERSONS ARE UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO THE GDR, AND NOT THAT OF THE U.S. COMMANDANT OR DEPUTY COMMANDANT IN WEST BERLIN. WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT AS USG OFFICIALS MEMBERS OF THE U.S. EMBASSY STAFF HAVE SPECIAL STATUS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN BERLIN AS A WHOLE (FOR EXAMPLE, IT IS UNACCEPTABLE FOR THEM TO USE GDR VISAS AT SECTOR-SECTOR CROSSING POINTS), IT IS THIS EMBASSY'S POSITION THAT EMBASSY PERSONNEL ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE U.S. FORCES, BERLIN.

7. WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT IT BE MADE CLEAR IN PARAGRAPH 5(A) OF THE DRAFT TEXT THAT WHILE ALLIED AUTHORITIES IN WEST BERLIN MAY BE AUTHORIZED TO PROVIDE "FACILITIES" (IN THE U.S. CASE, THE YELLOW ID CARD) TO PERSONNEL OF ALLIED EMBASSIES TO THE GDR, IT WILL NOT BE THE U.S. PRACTICE TO DO SO AS LONG AS THE WORDING IN THE YELLOW U.S. IDENTIFICATION CARD REMAINS AS IT NOW IS. WE WOULD SUGGEST, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS A VALID DISTINCTION BETWEEN PERSONNEL PERMANENTLY ASSIGNED TO THE AMERICAN EMBASSY, ON THE ONE HAND, AND OFFICIAL VISITORS AND TDY PERSONNEL, ON THE OTHER. WITH RESPECT TO THE LATTER TWO CATEGORIES, WE SEE NO OBJECTION TO CONTINUING THE PRACTICE, IF THIS IS DEEMED DESIRABLE AS A MATTER OF CONVENIENCE, OF PROVIDING SUCH PERSONS CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BERLIN 05132 281558Z

TEMPORARY YELLOW CARDS.

8. WE MAKE THIS RECOMMENDATION RECOGNIZING THAT WE SOMEWHAT COMPLICATE THE DAILY LIVES OF EMBASSY PERSONNEL BY DOING SO AND RUN CERTAIN RISKS. FOR EXAMPLE, EMBASSY DEPENDENT CHILDREN UNDER 14 YEARS OF AGE ARE NOT ISSUED GDR DIPLOMATIC IDENTIFICATION CARDS, AND THUS ARE OBLIGED TO TRAVEL TO AND FROM SCHOOLS IN WEST BERLIN WITH THEIR DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS AS IDENTIFICATION. THERE ARE POSSIBILITIES OF LOSS AND OF HAVING THESE PASSPORTS STAMPED AT SECTOR-SECTOR CROSSING POINTS. (WE WILL ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM IN A SEPARATE MESSAGE.)

9. NEVERTHELESS, OUR JUDGMENT IS THAT CERTAIN CONSEQUENCES FLOW FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS

BETWEEN THE US AND GDR AND THAT THESE CONSEQUENCES
MUST BE ASSESSED WITH SPECIAL CARE AS WE CONSIDER THE
STATUS OF BERLIN THE MODALITIES OF ALLIED TRAVEL,
AND THE NECESSITY TO MAINTAIN A CORRECT POSITION REGARDING THE STATUS
OF EMBASSY PERSONNEL.COOPER

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